

News Release

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Riverside Supports USEPA's Proposed Actions on Perchlorate, VOCs

Riverside, Calif. – This week, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) announced its intent to move forward with the development of a regulation for perchlorate in drinking water, a decision supported by Riverside Public Utilities (RPU), the main water supplier for the City of Riverside.

"We've long supported and complied with all state and federal regulations regarding perchlorate in drinking water," said RPU General Manager David H. Wright. "That includes supporting research and treatment techniques which assure that Riverside's water supplies meet or surpass all regulations for water quality and safety."

Perchlorate is both a naturally occurring and man-made chemical, and scientific research indicates that it may impact the normal function of the thyroid, which produces important developmental hormones. Based on this potential concern, USEPA will move forward with proposing a formal rule. California's Department of Health Services set a maximum contaminant level for the chemical at 6 parts per billion in 2007, "and Riverside has been in full compliance of this public health goal," Wright said.

In a separate action, USEPA announced it will also move toward establishing a drinking water standard to address a group of toxic chemicals that may pose risks to human health, instead of individually identifying contaminants, a new strategy that enhances drinking water protection in a more cost effective manner.

"Providing high quality water to our community has been our mission for over a hundred years," Wright said. "We encourage the EPA's new approach to setting standards that protects the health of all water consumers in America, but does so in a manner that doesn't dramatically increase the cost of providing water to our customers."

The first group of contaminants USEPA will address are volatile organic compounds (VOCs), chemicals such as industrial solvents including trichloroethylene (TCE) and tetrachloroethylene (PCE), which end up in water supplies from various industrial operations. Riverside tests annually for chemicals like TCE and PCE and remains in compliance with state and federal standards for the regulated contaminants included in this group as well, Wright said.

Established in 1895, Riverside Public Utilities is a consumer-owned water and electric utility governed by a board of nine community volunteers that provides high quality, reliable services to over 106,000 metered electric customers and 64,000 metered water customers throughout the City of Riverside. The Utility is committed to increased use of renewable energy resources and sustainable living practices that help reduce environmental impacts within the City of Riverside and the state of California.

www.RiversidePublicUtilities.com

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